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## Viewing cable 09STOCKHOLM31, GUANTANAMO DETAINEES: SWEDES OUTLINE PROCESS, WAIT

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09STOCKHOLM31**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">09STOCKHOLM31</a>	<a href="#">2009-01-15 17:10</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">SECRET</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Stockholm</a>

Appears in these articles:

[http://svtplay.se/v/2256485/dokument\\_inifran/de\\_hemliga\\_telegrammen](http://svtplay.se/v/2256485/dokument_inifran/de_hemliga_telegrammen)

O 151710Z JAN 09  
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
TO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4035  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STOCKHOLM 000031

S/WCI FOR GOREY AND RICCI  
OSD FOR DONOFRIO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/15/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [SW](#)  
SUBJECT: GUANTANAMO DETAINEES: SWEDES OUTLINE PROCESS, WAIT  
FOR "SIGNAL" FROM NEW ADMINISTRATION

REF: A. GOREY-DONOFRIO-KOEHLER E-MAIL 01/13/09  
[1](#)B. 08 STOCKHOLM 781  
[1](#)C. 08 STOCKHOLM 722  
[1](#)D. 07 STOCKHOLM 368  
[1](#)E. 05 STOCKHOLM 1589

¶1. (S) Summary: Sweden will not decide "right away" whether it will accept Guantanamo detainees but will likely make a decision if it gets a "signal" from the Obama Administration, MFA State Secretary Belfrage told DCM on January 14. Sweden would need to think carefully about accepting ethnic Uighurs because of potential Chinese reactions. In any case, added Belfrage, he thought he had heard that Germany would be accepting 17 Uighurs from Guantanamo for resettlement.

¶2. (S) Separately, Emboffs have learned that any Swedish agreement to accept Guantanamo detainees will require the support of the Government, the independent refugee agency (Swedish Migration Board or SMB), and the Swedish Security Services (SAPO). An upcoming parliamentary debate on January 20 - as well as the January 26 meeting of the GAERC -- will shed light on the Swedish government's willingness to facilitate the process. The independent SMB ultimately has the authority to adjudicate individual resettlement cases based on specific legal requirements. Past contacts indicate that Guantanamo detainees likely conform to the Swedish legal definition for refugee. SAPO also reviews all refugee cases and could block the resettlement of Guantanamo detainees determined to be a security threat either on the basis of their individual background or on the basis of the reaction of specific minority communities in Sweden to their presence.  
End Summary.

Waiting for a Signal from Obama Administration  
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¶3. (S) During a January 14 farewell lunch for the Ambassador, DCM raised with MFA State Secretary Frank Belfrage (minister equivalent) Sweden's willingness to accept Guantanamo detainees and handed over a packet of five representative cases for consideration (Ref A). Belfrage said the government was giving serious consideration to the matter. However, Sweden will not decide "right away" whether it will accept Guantanamo detainees but will likely make a decision only if it gets a "signal" from the Obama administration. On Uighurs per se, Sweden would need to think carefully about potential Chinese reactions, Belfrage said. In any case, added Belfrage, he thought he had heard that Germany would be accepting "17 Uighurs" from Guantanamo for resettlement.

Sweden's Position to Be Clarified in Late January  
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¶4. (S) Earlier in the week, Emboffs held a number of meetings with MFA and SMB interlocutors after a press spokesman for Prime Minister Reinfeldt stated publicly on January 4 that Sweden had not received a formal request from the USG to accept detainees from Guantanamo. Noting multiple earlier requests (Refs B-E and previous), Emboffs asked for clarification. On January 12, the MFA Americas Desk director, Ambassador Maria Lundqvist, assured POL Counselor that the MFA understood that earlier USG requests had been formal and official, and she cited a "misunderstanding" as the reason for the press spokesman's comments. She added that Swedish position would become clearer after January 20, when Migration Minister Tobias Billstrom is scheduled to reply to a December 2008 question from the opposition Social Democrats on the government's stance on Guantanamo detainees. The Swedes will also discuss the issue in preparation for scheduled discussion on the topic at the January 25-26 GAERC meeting.

Understanding the Swedish Process for Resettlement  
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¶5. (S) Pol Counselor and Emboff met later on January 12 with the SMB's Chief of the Asylum and Refugee Unit, Oscar Ekblad, to discuss precisely how the USG could make a formal and official request for resettlement of Guantanamo detainees. (Note: Ekblad's unit would be responsible for adjudicating any cases involving the Guantanamo detainees). Ekblad stated that the SMB is an independent government body

that adjudicates all claims for asylum and resettlement in Sweden. To be considered formally, cases must be referred to the SMB in one of three ways:

-- UNHCR: Ekblad noted that vast majority of refugee cases are referred to the SMB through UNHCR, and said that this was the "regular channel." He stated that if UNHCR were to request SMB consideration of specific Guantanamo detainees, SMB would adjudicate individuals purely on the merits of the case.

-- Special referrals from Swedish missions abroad: Ekblad said that there have been a small number of refugee cases referred through Swedish embassies overseas. In such cases, the Embassy refers the case to the MFA, which if in agreement forwards the case onward to the SMB for adjudication. Ekblad was careful to note that once the case was officially referred to the SMB, government officials could no longer influence the outcome. Refugee cases would be adjudicated by one of the five officers working for Ekblad using the Swedish Alien's Act of March 2006 as well as the principles of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. When pressed on the Guantanamo detainees, Ekblad stated that he believed these individuals likely conform to the Swedish legal definition for refugee.

-- Referrals directly from the Swedish government: Ekblad said that although there was no prescribed mechanism in place, the Government could issue special instructions to the SMB to consider specific groups of persons, such as Guantanamo detainees, for resettlement in Sweden. Ekblad said this would be a "political decision by the government" and would likely involve a consultative process between government officials and the SMB.

¶6. (C) When pressed on whether the USG's previous four requests to Swedish authorities on Guantanamo refugees had been formal, Ekblad said the SMB was bound by Swedish administrative law to respond to all requests, but if a request was not referred through one of the three channels described above, then it would be denied for "technical" reasons, i.e., not denied on the merits of the specific case. Ekblad stated that is why our November 2008 request for resettlement of Detainee 049 was denied (ref C).

¶7. (S) Ekblad also reported that the Swedish government, working in conjunction with UNHCR, would finalize the geographic allocation of Sweden's refugee quota for 2009 the week of January 19, 2009. Ekblad stated that Sweden has approved 1900 slots for migrants for 2009. He added that he thought half of these would be reserved for Iraqi refugees and some 500-600 split among refugees from the Horn of Africa, Iran, Malaysia, and Thailand -- with 300-400 slots left open for "emergency cases" (i.e., referrals from Swedish embassies). Ekblad said that if approved, Guantanamo detainees would likely be handled within this allocated emergency quota.

#### Swedish Threat Assessment Could Hinder Resettlement

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¶8. (S) Ekblad emphasized that the Swedish Security Services (SAPO) reviews all resettlement cases and that they effectively have a veto power. (As noted in reftels E and F, previous Guantanamo resettlement requests were denied in part on the basis of security concerns over specific individuals.)

#### Comment

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¶9. (S) In addition to the personal backgrounds of potential refugees, we assess that SAPO would also be concerned over specific classes of persons who might become "instant heroes" in certain Swedish minority communities because their status as former Guantanamo detainees. Ethnic Somalis, for example, would likely receive special status in Sweden's minority Somali communities in Rinkeby and elsewhere. Ethnic Uighurs or Uzbeks, on the other hand, would have no such

minority community base here. End Comment.

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